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Contents









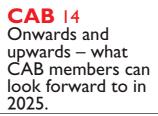


News 6

Origin joins
Qualicoat; GGF and
FENSA collaborate
on bi-annual
marketing report;
Reynaers appoints
mental health first
aider

Marketing 8

Tools, not tradesmen – how using AI could be damning for your business, writes Andrew Scott











IT & Marketing 10-12 Steel - 15 Health and safety 16 Heritage 18-19 Trade news 20-24 Classifieds 26-27 CAB buyer's guide 28-30





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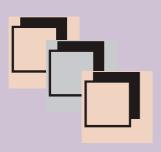
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THE FABRICATOR

Comment

Before I start to write these comments I always look to see what I wrote for the same month the previous year. Sometimes there is a relevance, most often there is not. Well this time last year Risky's crowd were still in charge and the speculation was all about a coming recession and whether or when the Bank of England would reduce interest rates.

Then there was the Future Homes Standard. All's quiet on that front at the moment but it is still there with the requirement that, in 2025, new built homes will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes built under current building regulations, becoming mandatory. Triple glazing gets a mention as do heat pumps (in the same sentence) with the implication that previous standards are inefficient. A nice bit of Orwellian phraseology, given that triple glazing is more efficient than double, but heat pumps don't come near gas boilers for efficiency.

We are still left with the contradiction of Documents F and L. F: let the fresh air in. L: keep the air out!

There is an acknowledgement that FHS could see additional costs feeding through to house prices. However it also expects homeowners to benefit from energy efficiency reducing the cost of bills. This while OFGEM keeps on raising the price cap, so pushing bills up. Now there is a roundabout you might like to jump off.

And also on the subject of net-zero, consumers seem to be losing interest in electric cars. Again it is a price thing. They are expensive. They are also getting more expensive to run while, although growing, the recharge network is still inadequate.

Now, hydrogen. It could easily replace natural gas in boilers which are much more efficient at heating buildings than heat pumps, which require electricity to operate. It could also, easily, replace petrol in cars. (As with electricity there is a re-supply network problem.) Hydrogen ticks all of the boxes. It is cheap, it is clean, (its by-product is water). But, I guess, for the government there is no money in it and there is heavy investment in electricity.

Another thing last January was the forthcoming general election. It had to happen, it was just a question of when. Risky eventually sprung it on us — well on everyone actually, even his own supporters were surprised by the July date. The outcome was pretty much what we expected. I had suggested in January that whoever took over would need a magic wand or a magic money tree to get us out of the economic mess. It turned out that the new government decided to use a magic sledgehammer instead. The first budget pleased absolutely no one, not even, and perhaps especially, the newly-elected labour MPs.

Don't get me wrong, I still think it was necessary. The economy was, and still is, in a state. Never mind the technical definition of a recession, it has been operating nil or just slightly over, nil growth for years. I believe we haven't yet recovered from the damages of lockdown. It killed a lot of small, micro businesses. Things we don't think about much unless we are involved: exercise classes, for example, the kind of thing you find in church halls all over the country were killed overnight and many still struggle. What has this to do with you? It isn't what they do, it is who they are. One man (person) band operations, the bottom of the commercial food chain. If their income was affected, it would affect the bigger small businesses, and on up until someone is postponing a window refurb. And that affects all of us.

John Roper





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Origin joins Qualicoat A wealth

rigin has been awarded a Qualicoat licence so joins a growing number of Qualicoat powder coaters across the UK and Ireland. Origin is now able to use the Qualicoat label of conformity on its and paperwork in its communications.

A spokesman for Origin's marketing team says: "Qualicoat is a leading international specification for application of powder coating. When we opened our powder coating facility, the target was always going to be to attain the accreditation as quickly as possible, as our drive for quality and operational excellence is synonymous Qualicoat. We know that by joining Qualicoat, it would mean the finish on our products would not only be visually appealing, but also robust and resilient enough to handle the challenges of everyday use for decades to come. For our trade customers, it's a trademark of



quality and trust, which is vital for our sales promise."

The up-to-date Qualicoat specification is available for download via the UK and Ireland association website.

of data

he GGF and FENSA have published a bi-annual Glazing Market Knowledge Report in collaboration with Business Pilot and Keystone Market Research. It gives an insight into upcoming industry fluctuations and trends. The document provides in-depth trade and consumer data, designed to inform and guide important decision making around product development, investments and marketing strategies, as well as establishing a benchmark for past, present and future trends.

This is the first report that the GGF and FENSA have written in conjunction with external partners. The input, which combines a mix of trade and consumer data, enables the GGF to present an even more accurate picture of the industry. It also includes data from the curtains and blinds company Hillarys, also a partner of FENSA.



can still often be associated with seeking mental health support. We all need to work to tackle that and being open is so important.

'We recently held a drop-in session for all Reynaers' employees, which was well attended. My colleagues were able to openly discuss self-care in an informal setting and I also found that this encouraged colleagues to seek confidential one-to-one support from myself when needed.

"Reynaers continues to go the extra mile in ensuring a supportive work environment for all employees. We are already seeing the benefits of breaking down the barriers when it comes to mental health support and encouraging an open and inclusive workspace."

Reynaers says that staff wellbeing is a priority. The company was recently voted a good place to work in an employee survey as part of its 'Together for Better' strategy.



"FENSA generates a wealth of data that allows us to track the overall direction of the home installation market, including the average installation cost which is around £4,500 at the moment," says Lis Clarke, FENSA operations director. "This bears up against Business Pilot's insights around the increasing quality of leads. Lead quantities may have decreased, but conversion rates are improving, with a higher average sales value. This is topped off by Keystone's findings which indicate that new windows and doors are still within the top choices of home improvement projects for homeowners within the next five years."

Keystone market research director, Charlotte Hawkes, says: "Without a clear understanding of the market and where your company falls within this it is impossible to make informed decisions. Together we have been able to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the industry, exploring where we currently stand and what lies ahead."

First aid in mino

Reynaers Aluminium UK has appointed a mental health first aider to offer employees free, unbiased mental health support.

It is the latest initiative from Reynaers to support staff wellbeing, reflecting the

company's 'caring' value. Pamela Herbert, Reynaers' first mental health first aider for the UK, has implemented a number of initiatives to encourage communication and to support improved employee wellbeing.

To qualify as a mental health first aider Herbert attended a training course, run by the mental health organisation Birmingham Mind. The two-day course covered multiple scenarios through role play and active listening, as well as providing information about external support that employees could access.

Access to the mental health support available has been clearly signposted across the company and Herbert made a selection of media, covering a wide variety of information around mental health and physical wellbeing, available throughout Reynaers' workspaces.

Herbert says: "It is all about opening lines of communication and breaking down the negative connotations that

6



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Al with caution

Andrew Scott, CEO of Purplex Marketing, discusses the potential dangers of relying solely on Algenerated content for brand marketing in 2025 and argues that, while it's a powerful tool, Al must be used with caution

Companies can spend years building a brand, only to have it destroyed with some bad decisions.

You probably saw the controversy surrounding the rebrand of Jaguar Cars at the end of last year. This iconic marque is synonymous with power, performance and luxury, with a cult following of enthusiasts. But last November Santino Pietrosanti, Jaguar's new head of brand, unveiled a re-brand that is set to alienate Jaguar's core customer and fan base in the hope of attracting a younger, alternative audience — an audience that doesn't resonate with the gas-guzzling performance cars driven by alpha personality types.

The result, I predict, will be disastrous, as Jaguar's historic customers flee to other iconic brands and Pietrosanti's new target audience simply choose vehicles they already connect with.

History is littered with similar tales of rebrands going wrong; who can forget Royal Mail's failed rebrand to 'Consignia' and back again within 18 months after customers defected on mass?

Your brand is much more than your logo or current ad campaign. In reality, your brand is better explained as how your customers perceive your products or business in their mind's eye. How they feel towards you.

And that feeling is affected by the messages they receive about your brand, whether it's on social media, in the press, online or the latest marketing literature.

Today, millions of companies are playing Russian roulette with their own brand, putting their very business at risk by turning to AI generated content.

AI is a powerful tool, but only in the right hands. With the arrival of Chat GPT and other AI generators, I've seen entire marketing departments across the world publishing AI generated content that is undermining their company's brand and reputation. Suddenly, every novice with an AI tool can be a 'brand expert', while senior marketers now think they can do it all themselves.

But what happens when everyone is churning out a tsunami of AI generated content and every 'prompt writer' is telling Chat GTP to 'write copy that will rank higher than our competitors?'

Overnight, strong brands have become vanilla, expert opinions have become diluted, everyone sounds the same and customers no longer know who to trust.

Of course, AI is a powerful tool that is only getting better. But it is a tool, not the tradesman. And the wrong tool in the wrong hands can be very damaging.

Old technology re-invented

AI isn't new. It was first used in the 1950s when a computer scientist trained a model to play chess and progressively learn.

I first became interested in AI in 2019 when I recruited a computer scientist in my marketing company, Purplex.



Since then we have been busy building and testing AI and learning models to optimise the power of AI for marketing, content and lead generation.

While Chat GPT brought AI into the mainstream, it is still a blunt instrument and, sadly, those that use it often lack the wider skills to use the tool to its best effect.

At Purplex we built our own AI model, Orago, based on the Llama large language model. Orago has been trained on our 20 years' of specialist marketing knowledge in the construction and home improvement industry, with indepth expertise that general AIs cannot replicate.

When we work with a client, our team build a dedicated AI model that we train on every aspect of the client, from brand values and culture to product knowledge, the history of the business and customers. The client AI gets better over time as it learns.

However, it requires real human skills to understand the nuances and bring together expert prompt writers, experienced content creators and human editors to create powerful, meaningful content that resonates with the brand and really moves the audience.

That's why, despite our huge investment in AI and other technologies, Purplex is investing more in human marketing experience with 'lived experience' than ever before.

Next time your marketing team use AI to write your blog or website copy, email newsletter, social media posts or ad campaign, consider the fact that everyone else is doing the same thing, with the same tool. □

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Efficient marketing

A customer relationship management system – CRM – can be a vital tool in a company's marketing strategy, writes Rhonda Ridge head of Ab initio which offers the AdminBase CRM system

There are suggestions that, with the Labour Party's house building ambitions, the industry will start to se e signs of growth again in 2025. But with the market full of particularly hungry competition, companies need to be ready with powerful sales and marketing tactics to stand out and win business.

A fully integrated management system is a cost-effective way to maximise sales and marketing opportunities as well as improve efficiencie s This could be one of the most important tools for home improvement businesses to have in their armoury next year.

Email strategies

With e-mail usage expected to grow again in 2025, there is little doubt that e-mail marketing will continue to play an important role in promotional strategies. To achieve tangible results in this area, targeted messaging, integration and monitoring are key.

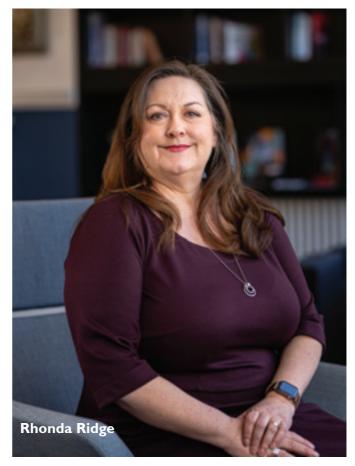
A lot of businesses understand the benefits of e-mail marketing but find the hassle of se ndingcampaigns and managing data too much of a barrier. Pulling out the right contacts from a database and exporting them into mailing software such as MailChimp, and then often manually updating any changes to the data back into your system, is time-consuming. However, if you can manage your e-mail campaigns within an integrated system, it suddenly becomes an easy and hugely useful tool.

Targeted messages win sales

The AdminBase installer management system centralises data in an installation business so that all

...e-mail usage is expected to grow in 2025

updates inform one database. The database holds records of customers and prospects, with the capability to add leads manually straight into the system or automatically via other programs. Any changes made to a lead or project is live immediately and available to all relevant users. This means you can segregate leads sensibly using the most upto-date information and easily contact different groups with targeted messages. For example, you might create a limited time offer in January but target that offer to people that have previously shown an interest in specific products.



The AdminBase system also makes it easier to send these marketing e-mails with its add-on facility, AdminBase Campaigns.

AdminBase Campaigns

The AdminBase Campaigns feature can send bulk emails to contacts in the centralised database, so that there is no need to export and import data to a third-party piece of software. Installation businesses can add their own email campaign designs into the system and send it to customers or prospects directly. And when responses come back in from the campaign, they can immediately be updated into the same system to ensure that all records are current. This add on feature is already proving a huge success with customers achieving an average open rate of 32.9% and a 1.6% click rate.

Ongoing support

Once an enquiry turns into a sales appointment, the allencompassing AdminBase CRM provides quotation documents and sales support as well as ongoing customer support throughout the life of the project

www.abinitio.com/en/

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Keeping in touch

For two or three decades, fabricators have increasingly come to rely on highly customised or even bespoke software solutions from Business Micros writes Nick Bailey, head of sales at the BM Group. That could all be about to change

Our in-house programmers have become experts at adapting the manufacturing and pricing modules in our processing software Evolution, and even writing dedicated modules in our business management software EvoNET, to suit the specific needs of individual customers.

That's because, to an extent, fabricators have looked to use their software to create USPs and distinguish their offering from those of their competitors.

That's all starting to change though – partly with the advent of our BM TOUCH online quoting, ordering and lead generation platform. This has been deliberately created as a universal platform with standard features and options intended to work for everyone.

It is a big shift in mindset for many, but we are starting to see a definite move away from bespoke to standard BM software solutions, as fabricators come to appreciate the very significant benefits that come from that:

Simpler support

It is quicker and easier to access support on a standard product rather than on a bespoke one. A call or online chat with any of our support team will answer the vast majority of queries on TOUCH or on Evolution and EvoNET—because they are all likely to be things the team have come across before.

Increased knowledge sharing

As the number of TOUCH users increases to the levels we already see on our other products, so will system knowledge and experience across the industry. In the future, it will be even easier for users to share knowledge – and even tips – with others.

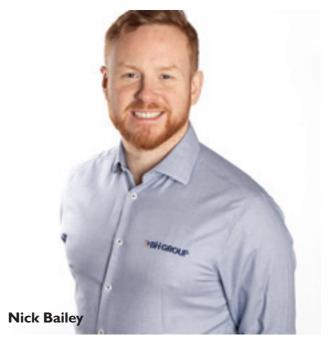
Easier training and recruitment

By keeping TOUCH universal, we can ensure that anyone who is trained to use TOUCH at one company will be able to use it just as effectively at another. It doesn't just reduce the amount of initial training required, it also makes for more easily transferrable skills when people change roles or jobs. And that applies to all our other software as well. If you use a standard version of Evolution or EvoNET, then it will be significantly easier for you to recruit fabrication or processing staff.

Better value

Our aim with TOUCH was always to build a system which would work for the whole sector and, in order to do





that, it had to have mass appeal and be affordable. The only way that we can guarantee that now and in the future is if we use our programming and operational resources as efficiently as possible.

BM TOUCH is a universal platform, but that doesn't mean that every fabricator's version of BM TOUCH is the same. The key strength of the software is that it is populated using real time product and pricing data – and that obviously depends on which systems and products are being manufactured.

From Business Micros' perspective, the focus for our programming teams – for Evolution and EvoNET as well as TOUCH is maintaining the databases for all the different window and door systems and ensuring that each fabricator's TOUCH system talks directly to their Evolution and EvoNET systems.

As we continue rolling out TOUCH to more customers – we're at 30+ TOUCH Portal users now – we are obviously listening closely to all the feedback we're getting about what users like about the current TOUCH features and functionality and what they would like to see added in the future.

Our team is responding to that feedback but on a much broader basis than previously. We are looking at engineering-in features where the benefits are for the majority of TOUCH users rather than just one, and where the cost of engineering those features still represents good value for all our users.

I am very encouraged by how positively customers are embracing that − particularly as it means prices will remain competitive. □ www.store.bm-touch.co.uk











Forging ahead in '25

It's that time of year when we all reflect on another year passing and identify the events that have shaped or impacted on our success. With the war in Ukr ane showing no signs of abating, an imminent change in global leadership over the pond and not forgetting the many challenges we have had at home: a general election, and a controversial budget all making the landscape for building a successful business challenging. However, we are fortunate that within CAB's membership and especially in our segment of the market, we have some very resilient and resourceful people, so we continue to stay strong, writes CAB CEO Nigel Headford



Thave enjoyed getting out and meeting many of our members. Understanding their businesses and listening to their ideas for more interaction with CAB is key to growing the benefits that can be provided by a successful association. Meeting more members in 2025 is at the top of my to do list, so please bear with me as I work my way around the UK.

Looking forward to 2025, there are a number of topics that are going to be filling up our inboxes such as, U-values and part L, closed loop recycling, the preparation for CBAM's introduction in 2027 along with the discussion around urban mining, pre or post-consumer scrap and how we maintain aluminium in the UK's circular economy by not letting used aluminium drift off to mainland Europe and Asia for recycling.

From a CAB perspective we are looking forward to an exciting year. January sees Dale Pegler joining the CAB team as technical director. Having already held several strategy meetings with Dale, there are a number of new incentives to be launched during the coming year. One of these is the CAB U-Value charter where we have several major fenestration companies backing the incentive. The scheme aims to enable companies signing up to the charter, to offer trusted thermal data which meets a set criterion.

Since joining CAB as CEO in 2024 we have attracted 11 new members and have a number of other businesses express their intention of joining in 2025. The CAB organisation is going from strength to strength and, as expected, new members are all keen to share their expertise amongst the rest of the membership, not to sell, but to educate, add value and participate.

The CAB spring forum is now fully launched and the team looks forward to welcoming members and their guests to The Deep in Hull. The theme for the forum is sustainability and in the evening we have managed to secure Monty Halls as our after dinner speaker. He is a broadcaster, speaker, naturalist, former Royal Marine,

travel writer, marine biologist, and leadership specialist. His experience covers over two decades of leading teams in some of the most remote environments on earth, presenting wildlife and adventure documentaries. Seeing Monty present whilst sharks, rays and turtles swim around in the giant tanks promises to be breathtaking.

The FIT Show is promising to be larger than ever and the CAB team will be present with a relaxing area for the opportunity to meet our industry. We look forward to welcoming visitors to our stand for a chat or a well-deserved coffee.

Supporting the industry, the CAB team are busy planning for the return of the annual CAB technical conference at Loughborough. Historically this has been a very well attended event and the technical committee is busy planning a day full of presentations and discussions. It's going to be a very worthwhile event.

In the summer the inaugural CABfest and golf day which will take place in June at Wokefield Park, Reading is gathering a massive amount of interest, giving the team the opportunity to plan more and more elements into what promises to be a fun-filled networking summer event, the type of which is new to our industry. Who does not like a drink, laughing with friends and colleagues, making new acquaintances and discussing opportunities, all whilst listening to live music and eating street food?

The CAB team is also busy looking at the inaugural CAB AGM gala dinner and awards evening in October, more information soon. The evening will be familiar to most of our members and their guests, but we will have some real value-added presentations beforehand from key speakers, with the new element of an added awards segment, celebrating successes throughout the membership. \square

To learn more about the use of aluminium in construction contact CAB. To join the association and be recognised as being involved in supporting your industry and helping to shape its future Visit www.c-a-b.org.uk

The galv-mark

Reinforcement is a critical part of a window's construction. Yet, unlike most other component parts, the steel is typically unbranded with fabricators unable to tell any meaningful difference between the products supplied by different companies. With this in mind, the decision to launch AngloGalv was an obvious one says Anglo's MD David Evans

We introduced AngloGalv to establish a benchmark for galvanised steel reinforcement for the window and door industry. If customers are buying their reinforcement from Anglo with the AngloGalv shield mark on it, they can be assured it is galvanised to the BS EN 10346 standard, in specified zinc coating thicknesses of Z140 and Z275.

BS EN 10346 is the British and European standard that applies to hot-dip zinc-coated steels used in cold roll-forming and conformance ensures that products consistently meet and exceed quality assurance targets.

Assurance

The historic reputation of the steel roll-forming industry was tarnished by a handful of poor suppliers. As a result not all steel reinforcement that entered the supply chain met the high standards expected.

This has meant that all suppliers were tarred with the same brush and sometimes unfairly subjected to criticism. Launching AngloGalv was one way that we can provide the quality assurances our customers need.

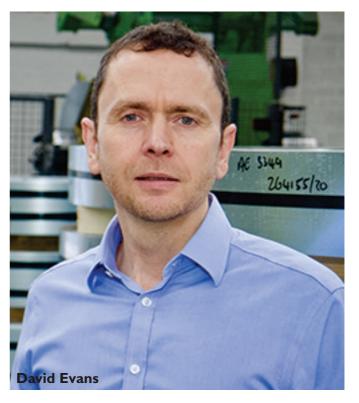
The launch of AngloGalv also neatly coincided with Anglo's ISO9001 accreditation, which recognises our commitment to improving systems and services right across the business.

Many of our customers themselves are operating under an ISO9001-approved quality management system. And we found that many were asking us for assurance regarding the galv quality of the steel they were getting.

For example, they asked for mill certificates or other technical evidence of the quality of the zinc coating on the product. And we gave them that because we source steel from UK suppliers and we have full traceability right through the production cycle.

But steel with the AngloGalv shield on it immediately assures them that it is carefully sourced and meets the relevant standards.





Challenging

We believe AngloGalv fills a practical gap in customers' internal procedures.

At first appearances, when you look at the steel that Anglo produces, or any other competitor produces, it may look the same, and that can ultimately be challenging for customers when they're trying to compare one product with the other.

Because many want assurances around the underlying quality of the steel they were getting from us, but didn't have the means in house to establish that, we are also loaning – for free – galv meters so they can test the products for themselves. Even if they buy from another supplier.

Available to all UK fabricators, whether they are Anglo customers or not, the meters offer a quick and easy method to check the average zinc coating thickness on the steel reinforcement they buy and ultimately put into their customers' finished doors and windows.

The introduction of AngloGalv sets a benchmark for quality and we are pleased to be a driving force for professionalism in the window and door industry.

Ultimately, you wouldn't make a window with unbranded profile or hardware, so why use unbranded steel reinforcement?

www.angloeuropean.net

Breathing easy

Each year, an estimated 12,000 deaths are attributed to occupational lung diseases in the UK, with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and non-asbestos-related lung cancers accounting for over half of these fatalities. Data published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2023 paints a stark picture of workplace health hazards, particularly the risks associated with inhaling respirable dust, Ira Morris, country manager at Dustcontrol UK writes

A ccording to the HSE, silica dust alone contributes to approximately 500 deaths each year in the UK.

This issue takes on heightened urgency as November marked both COPD awareness day and Lung Cancer awareness month. While these events serve to promote early detection and prevention, they also spotlight the role of workplace exposures in the onset of these conditions. Among the gravest concerns is the sharp rise of silicosis cases – a preventable yet incurable lung disease linked to the inhalation of respirable crystalline silica (RCS).

Dust inhalation: The pint you don't see

At Dustcontrol UK, we have long been pushing for more to be done to protect workers from the dangers of dust inhalation.

Our recent *Dust to Dust* campaign visualises the dangers of prolonged dust inhalation. Over a 40-year career, an average construction worker without proper dust extraction equipment could inhale up to 0.68 pints of respirable crystalline silica (RCS), and if you consider wider harmful dust exposure this is expected to be up to 1.28 pints. This invisible threat is more than a statistic; it is a health crisis in slow motion.

But RCS is not the only culprit. Other hazardous dust types, including wood dust and asbestos, remain prevalent in various industries. Together, these airborne threats significantly raise the risk of chronic lung diseases, lung cancer, and even nasal cancer.

The role of effective dust management

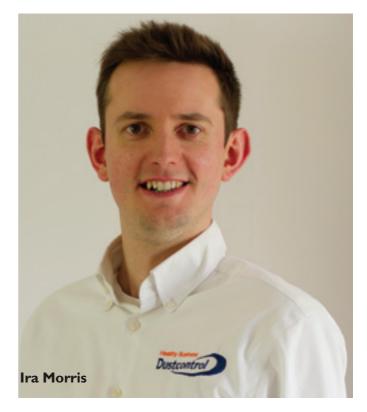
Preventing workplace dust exposure is not only a moral imperative but a legal obligation under the UK's Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations. These require employers to implement robust measures to mitigate risks. Fortunately, effective solutions exist.

Dustcontrol UK has pioneered innovations in dust extraction technology, with systems designed to capture dust directly at its source. Featuring high-performance HEPA-13 filters, our solutions remove 99.995% of harmful particles, ensuring cleaner, safer air for workers.

We offer a robust 'Dust Doctor' programme, which sends experienced safety specialists to manufacturing sites across the UK. We engage with teams to highlight the oftenoverlooked dangers of dust exposure and provide practical solutions tailored to the specific needs of each workplace.

Key strategies for dust control include:

• Investment in dust extraction systems: employing ontool extraction equipment and air cleaners can drastically reduce airborne dust. Dustcontrol's AirCube and DCTromb models are prime examples of this technology in action.



- Regular maintenance: local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems must undergo routine testing and filter replacements to maintain effectiveness.
- Training and awareness: workers and site managers must understand the dangers of dust and the best practices for prevention. Dustcontrol UK's Dust Doctor initiative offers onsite training and assessments to support compliance and safety.
- Adopting new regulations: as the HSE rolls out updated guidelines for engineered stone fabrication, businesses must act swiftly to adopt these measures.

Looking ahead: A safer future

Occupational lung diseases are largely preventable with proper intervention. By combining cutting-edge dust extraction technologies with comprehensive worker education and regulatory compliance, industries can ensure that workers breathe clean air, not dust.

As cases of silicosis and other lung diseases continue to rise, now is the time for businesses to put the health and safety of their employees first through prevention. The pint of dust must remain a cautionary tale, not a reality for the next generation of workers.

www.dustcontrol.uk

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Figure correct as of Dec 2024













Building a legacy

With its Legacy vertical slider, Quickslide has changed the expectations of what an authentically styled heritage window, that is fit for the future, looks like writes Quickslide MD Ben Weber

With Legacy VS, more listed and conservation properties will be able to benefit from modern, high-performing, low-maintenance, great looking windows. I think this is the best heritage window on the market. It means homeowners now have a genuine choice when it comes to upgrading windows in their period properties.

The window has a slim midrail that is over a centimetre narrower than before, coupled with 90° mechanical joints, a deep bottom rail and run-through sash horns without the tell-tale PVC-U 'lip'; we reckon Legacy VS more closely replicates the traditional timber sash styling that is a requirement for planning approval in conservation areas and for listed buildings.

Even the optional astragal bars come with spacers between the units to create the appearance of separate panes. Options for wood effect foil finishes and traditional hardware styles complete the look.

Meeting and exceeding building regulations

As the industry looks ahead in the expectation of more stringent requirements for energy efficiency Legacy VS is already ahead of the curve. Its 1.2 U-value hits the target for windows in new build homes, rather than settling for the limiting U-value of 1.6 W/m²K. It does so without the need for triple glazing or expensive krypton gas.

We have replaced some of the steel reinforcement in the sashes with better insulating plastic reinforcement, inserted additional insulating materials into some of the chambers in the frame and cill and upgraded the coating on the glass unit. It is part of our ethos for Legacy VS to look to the future as well as to the past so that we could create a real and affordable authentic alternative to timber sash windows with absolutely no compromises.

Peace of mind for homeowners

Along with improved energy efficiency and performance, Legacy VS is designed with security in mind too. Heritage and modern hardware style options come with PAS24 upgrades available.

PAS24, a rigorous security standard that tests windows against a range of potential forced entry methods including attacks with tools, is required in some areas to meet building regulations. So our accreditation offers homeowners peace of mind and may also qualify them for lower home insurance premiums.

Security is something we know is important to homeowners, so it is important that we've recently, once again, passed our audit with a perfect score. This confirms continued compliance for PAS24 security and BS EN 14351-1 windows and doors standards across all our products.

IT & marketing

Quickslide's trade customers have not been forgotten in



Legacy VS's design. Quick-release tilt arms mean the sashes can be easily removed pre-installation, making fitting easier. Legacy VS is also supported by Legacy-On-Screen, our custom-built marketing web tool that keeps your websites up to date.

Working in period properties brings its own challenges, so we designed Legacy VS to be as easy to install as possible. And because we know our trade partners want to concentrate on the job in hand, we launched Legacy On-Screen to take some of the load off when it comes to marketing.

When it came to designing Legacy VS we really did think about it from all angles – what do we need to do to meet the criteria for planning approval, building regulations and future-proofing, then making sure we were working with our trade partners to improve sales and service.

In a nutshell, in Legacy VS we believe that we have created an authentic, compliant, high-performing timberalternative, traditional sash window that is fit for everything modern living demands but which won't break the bank.

www.quickslide.co.uk

New demands

The fenestration industry has long been shaped by distinct seasonal cycles with demand for premium windows and doors following a predictable ebb and flow, writes Jo Trotman, marketing manager at The Residence Collection

Recently, we have noticed, these seasonal norms increasingly fading, particularly following the Covid pandemic and amidst increasing climate changes. It is now good old lifestyle needs that are affecting the current market.

At the moment, in still uncertain economic times, many consumers are taking longer to make decisions. This approach really has flattened seasonal peaks, spreading demand throughout the year.

The weather

Spring and summer months would traditionally be a high season, yet unseasonably wet weather across much of the UK last year had a dampening effect on the fenestration industry. While September and October are typically slower periods we experienced an unexpected surge in demand as consumers took advantage of the dry spell.

Key events provide motivation

Consumers are increasingly driven by convenience and lifestyle needs when planning projects, with demand spiking around key events and holidays. We are seeing strong activity in advance of major occasions such as school breaks, Easter and in the build -up to Christmas, as householders aim to complete projects on their own timelines rather than waiting for traditional or weather-related peak seasons.

This shift toward personal scheduling means that historically slow periods can now be just as busy as typical high-demand times, making flexibility essential for businesses in our industry.

Additionally, shifting trends in planning approvals, especially for heritage areas and property conversions, are supporting this flexible approach. Approvals that were once highly seasonal or restricted are now becoming more responsive, allowing consumers to move forward with projects – whether in heritage zones or otherwise – based on convenience rather than timing constraints.

Planning a new era for consumers

Particularly for listed buildings or those situated in conservation areas, planning approvals can be difficult due to the sensitive approach the local authority takes to upgrading historic properties. The time these types of approvals take can also have a lasting effect on when consumers move forward with their window installations.

However, The Residence Collection is home to three window systems which are readily approved by local authorities around the UK. This allows for a more robust process when moving forward with window installations in heritage properties.

Supply chain needs to meet demand

For businesses in the fenestration industry, these



behavioural changes highlight the importance of agility and adaptability in operations. We have responded by optimising our services and production to remain flexible year-round, able to meet demand as it arises, no matter the season.

Looking forward

In this evolving market, we expect the demand pattern to continue shifting, with fewer distinct seasonal highs and lows. As a result, consumers can feel empowered to make their decisions based on what works best for their own timelines. With increased access to on-demand resources and a team ready to meet their needs year-round, the decision to invest in high-quality windows and doors can be made on each homeowner's own terms.

As the concept of seasonality diminishes, home improvement is becoming a year-round market, dictated more by individual needs and external factors like weather than by tradition.

www.residencecollection.co.uk

Covering the south

Rehau UK has appointed Luke Boban as head of sales—windows for the South of England. Boban originally joined Rehau in January 2019 as area sales manager for the South East.

Boban says: "I am very excited to have been appointed as Rehau's head of sales – windows for the whole of southern England. I have worked hard to establish myself in the South East, and also build a rapport with customers in the South West while working in that region on secondment.

"This has made the transition into this new role easier, as I am highly familiar with Rehau's clients across the area. I will be looking to recruit further sales people as part of my efforts to boost the company's profile in this key region. This includes demonstrating Rehau's frame portfolio – particularly the new ARTEVO, which has already been extremely well-received by commercial contractors."

Boban's emphasis on recruitment mirrors his own rapid ascent within the company. He will be taking over from Steve Tonkiss, whose experience and knowledge has contributed to Boban's own development.

"Both Rehau and Steve specifically, have been integral to my professional development," Boban says. "I'd like to thank Steve for giving me such a strong base to build from across the south of England and will look to continue and expand upon his success.

"This will not only involve hiring more staff to service this vital region, but also further cementing the team

Fishing secure

Yale has launched the Postmaster Professional TS008 slim letterplate, its most streamlined design to date, offering top-tier security, and exceptional durability.

Yale says it is engineered to meet the highest industry standards and has been specifically developed to resist opportunistic attacks – making it ideal for any residential setting.

The letter plate is accredited by Secured by Design (SBD), and meets the requirements of FD30 and FD60 when tested as part of a door set, PAS24:2022, and approved document Q.

According to the manufacturer it also has several features that equip it to withstand attacks from burglars. Among these is its barrier protection system, which features dual side plate shields that automatically extend when the internal flap is opened, offering additional security by blocking external access to the thumb-turn or key.

CombShield defence technology adds an additional layer of security. Obstructing the view through the letterplate, it prevents attackers from visually gauging the



culture for which Rehau is renowned. I will look to organise more in-person meetings with various area sales managers to share successes and market feedback, as I strongly believe these learnings will be crucial to our continued growth in commercial projects and beyond."

position of items inside the home. This works by incorporating comb-like teeth that act as barriers, reducing the ability for a fishing rod to move side-to-side and potentially preventing the retrieval of items like keys or small valuables.

Brett Evans, technical director at Yale, says: "The latest ONS statistics show that front door security is more important than ever. With entry through an unlocked door dropping from 15% to 10% more homeowners appear to be locking their doors. However, 62% of burglars still enter through the front of the house. This suggests burglars are increasingly finding new ways of entering homes without going through an unlocked door – such as fishing for keys through the letterplate.

"Our new Postmaster Professional TS008 slim letterplate provides perfect answer. One of the slimmest letterplates the market, it is not only sleek and stylish, but fearsomely robust as well.

"To provide even more peace of mind, it also comes with a 10-year Mechanical Guarantee and a 25-year Surface Finish Guarantee, so our customers can have added confidence in its performance and durability."

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Automating efficiency

Dekko Window Systems has boosted its production capabilities following a £350,000 investment in a Haffner SBA-5 automated machining centre.

The Haffner SBA-5 brings automation and efficiency to Dekko's production line. Kurt Greatrex, sales director at Dekko Window Systems says: "This complements the two existing machining centres that we operate and solidifies Dekko's ability to deliver superior products with speed and precision.

"Our investment in the Haffner SBA-5 allows us to scale up production of our Deceuninck PVC-U range enabling us to continue meeting our customers' growing demands with unmatched quality."

The investment follows last year's acquisition of a Graf Synergy machine, also from Haffner, which enabled Dekko to introduce a fully seamless PVC-U window to the market. Greatrex says: "The new Haffner SBA-5 is set to play a crucial role in meeting the increasing demand for our products, particularly the upgraded Deceuninck PVC-U range.

"Our seamless window has been a game-changer in the industry, with an extremely positive reaction from our customers. We anticipate the vast majority of our PVC-U sales to be fully seamless, making ongoing machinery investment an essential part of our future strategy.

"These investments have been made possible by Dekko's acquisition by Inwido in 2022. Inwido's backing provides Dekko with the resources and stability to



continue innovating and excelling in the market, ensuring the delivery of high-quality products and services." □

www.dekkowindows.com

finish/fabric swatches that show product options at a glance. Additionally, critical compliance information, such as British Standard testing requirements for fire doors, is now explicitly detailed, giving buyers confidence to select the right solution for their needs.

Craig Fox, sales director at Strand Hardware, says: "We are delighted to release these new data

sheets, which are a big step forward in providing transparency our clients want. All the key information finishes, specifications, compliance standards, and technical data - is now readily available in one place, making the decision process faster and simpler."

The new technical data sheets are now available for download

Download

finger data

Strand Hardware has launched a set of technical data sheets for its range of finger protection devices.

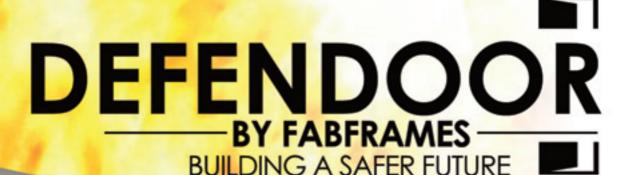
Designed to meet the exacting standards of architects, specifiers, and architectural ironmongers, these enhanced resources answer frequent client questions on finishes, material sizes. composition, technical specifications and British Standards compliance.

The updated data sheets make it easier to

understand the features of Strand's range of seven finger protection devices, with clear, easy-to-view tables and



www.strandhardware.co.uk





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ASFP hot for training

The Association for Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP) has expanded its team with the appointment of Michelle Letts as an additional Training Officer.

Letts brings 16 years' of experience from a variety of roles in construction and manufacturing. She joins the ASFP from ASFP member FSI where she had been an area account manager since April 2022. At FSI, she was responsible for product awareness and basic installation training, interpreting specifications and client liaison and management.

Letts says: "I am excited to be joining the ASFP team and look forward to developing strong relationships with members as well as reaching out to the wider construction industry. I hope to use my communication and problemsolving skills to provide an outstanding service while helping with the delivery of the association's training offering. I find the fire industry fascinating and extremely welcoming and hope I can play a role in encouraging other women to join."

ASFP managing director Mike Ward says: "We are delighted to welcome Michelle to the ASFP team. I have no doubt that she will play an active role in the further development of our growing training function. Michelle brings wide-ranging skills which will ensure all of our training delegates continue to receive the highest levels of service."

www.asfp.org.uk





Cardiff-based Dudley's Aluminium is supporting the construction of Cornwall Council's new services hub in Liskeard in the south-east of the county.

The integrated services hub is the latest development on the former cattle market site in the town centre and will provide accommodation for a range of services including adult education, family hub, registrars and the Department for Work and Pensions, in addition to office space and meeting facilities.

Dudley's Aluminium will be working with Morgan Sindall Construction on the project, installing Metal Technology System doors, windows and capped curtain walling. □

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Read CEO Nigel Headford's column every month in The Fabricator – see page 14

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